

AN
ANSWER

TO

Sam. 16

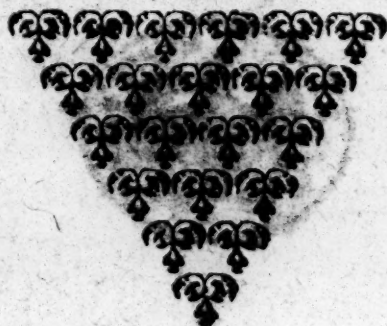
Mr. STUBBS's

SERMON,

For God, or for Baal.

Stubs (Philips)

Archdeacon of St. Albans



LONDON:

Printed in the Year 1703.

Lucas

W. J. M. 1703

MA

ANSWER

TO

MR. J. O. B. 22

FERMON

For God or for Baal.



LONDON:

Printed in the Year 1803.

An Answer to Mr. Stubs's Sermon, &c.

MR. Stubs, while the *Bill for Preventing Occasional Conformity* was depending in the last Sessions of *Parliament*, published a *Sermon*, intituled, *For God, or for Baal; or no Neutrality in Religion against Occasional Communion*; and in Justice to him I give you his Profession: *That he had no Aim against any particular Dissenter, nor the whole Body of 'em, in this Discourse, than as became his Station, &c. P. 27.* I must beg his Pardon that I cannot agree with him in what becomes the Character of a Minister of the Gospel of Christ Jesus, which I take to be the Reverse of Mr. Stubs's Practice, that is so very different from the Precept of *Loving our Enemies*, that it endeavours to render odious our Friends, who are Christians and Protestants, and with equal Success, at least with their Brethren of the Church of *England*, carry on the Cause of Christianity, as well as support both our Ecclesiastical and Civil Liberties against those who have never wanted the Will to destroy 'em both, even when they have wanted the Power; and notwithstanding the present Ingratitude of some Members of the Church of *England* to them, the Safety of the Church it self is owing to their Principles and Practices, in dethroning King *James* the II. and setting up our Great Restorer, King *WILLIAM* III. of Ever-Glorious Memory, the *Unhappiness of whose Reign it was* (according to this Author) *to tend to Division*, P. 28. By which I suppose he means, that he encouraged the Dissenters: But I challenge him to shew it in any Instance throughout his Reign, that was not due to 'em as Men, and as Christians, and which by their faithful Service, and Gratitude to him, appears to have been their Deserts. As to Mr. Stubs's Charges against 'em of *Trimming, Doubling, and Halting between Two Opinions*, P. 26. and acting against their Belief and Perswasion, I leave the Reader to make what Judgment he pleases of the Foundation of that very familiar

miliar Use and Application of these Terms of Reproach throughout his Sermon: But I cannot help saying with Archbishop Tillotson; *When Religion once comes to supplant Moral Righteousness, when it serves to no Purpose, but to be a Bond of Conspiracy to inflame Mens Tempers to a greater Fierceness, and to set a keener Edge upon their Spirits, and to make them Ten Times more the Children of Wrath and Cruelty than they were by Nature, then surely it loses its Nature: For let any Man say worse of Atheism and Infidelity if he can. And for God's sake what is Religion good for but to reform the Manners and Dispositions of Men, to restrain Humane Nature from Violence and Cruelty, from Falshood and Treachery? Better it were there were no reveal'd Religion, and that Humane Nature were left to the Conduct of its own Principles, which are much more mild and merciful, much more for the Peace and Happiness of Humane Society, than to be acted by a Religion that inspires Men with so wild a Fury, and prompts them to commit such Outrages, and is continually undermining the Welfare of Mankind. In short, such a Religion as teaches Men to propagate and advance it self by Means so evidently contrary to the very Nature and End of all Religion. But to go farther, I know not but that Trimming, Doubling and Halting, may be preferable to such furious Bigotry. If the Charge of Knavery hath any Force, when Interest is annex'd to any Practice, the Dissenters have much the Advantage in that respect, who have not half so many profitable Principles as the Clergy of the Church, with whom all the Church Preferments, as well as the Cry, goes. For they may say it is very difficult to conceive that such a Number of Men should agree in so many Points, as they are oblig'd to do, who take up their Opinions out of pure Conviction, especially when their Practices makes them look more like Soldiers that are list'd, than Men concern'd for Truth; and those Means to bring Men to their Communion that are in use, are the farthest from what the Author of their Religion enjoins. How far such, in whatsoever Communion they are, may be term'd Baal's Priests, P. 18. I leave to be considered. Sure I am that their Zeal is of the same Kind, from the like Means made use to propagate their several*

Opinions,

Fourth Volume of
Sermons, printed in
his Life-time,
p. 17, 18.

Opinions, and the like Pleas in their own Vindication. Mr. *Stubs* would clear himself from the Charge of a Persecutor by an avow'd Notion that he says *he has of Toleration*. What sort of Toleration this is, that he means, cannot be known till he explains himself; in the meanwhile his *Sermon and his View*, &c. are the best Rules to know him by; where his Divinity and his Honesty keep an equal Pace, and his Tolerating Temper is as conspicuous, as his wilful Concealment of what makes for his Adversary's Cause. For why else was a History only given of the Modern Practice of the Occasional Conformity of the Dissenters, while at that time only some Advantages were annex'd to it, and not of the ancient Practice, when there was no Prospect of Advantage? This he could not be ignorant of after the publishing of *Mr. Calamy's Abridgment of Mr. Baxter's Life*; and which he must own to have read after he hath given it the Character of *Infamous*; nor indeed could he be well ignorant of it before, if he had the least Insight into the Dissenting Controversie. The Excellent Bishop *Sarum* says, *That it is no new Practice to evade a Law, as they that have borne a large Share in these Controversies must acquaint the Commons.*

P. 4 of *Stubs's View*.

View.

View, P. 6.

Lords Proc. on the Occas. Bill,
8vo. P. 36.

But this Author is for no more Truth than will serve his Purpose, and that can be accommodated to the Interest that he espouses, and is safe in his Reputation among those to whom Zeal alone, without Knowledge, is sufficient, as well those that allow a little Lying for the Truth.

As A. Bp. Tillotson has it, Sermon
Vol. 4. P. 433.

Mr. *Stubs* himself hath shew'd the Impertinency of his Title, *For God, or for Baal*, to a Discourse against the Occasional Communion of some Dissenters, by granting that he doth not *Brand those of the Separation in England with the Worship of Baal*. When yet the greatest Part of his Readers, I mean those that read only his Title Page, cannot but think that he intends it for a Parallel; and indeed the Insinuations throughout his Sermon sufficiently discover it, tho' contrary to the Passage before cited; and

and this I am ready, if call'd on, to make appear. As to *Halting between Two Opinions* the Text restrains it to the Worship of God and Baal. But let us consider it as distinct from that Limitation, and see whether Occasional Conformity can properly be said to be *Halting between Two Opinions*, tho' it be not a *Halting between God and Baal*. But of this there is no Proof throughout the *Sermon*, unless a frequent Affirmation pass for one. For if there is nothing done at the Reception of the Sacrament, either at Church or Meeting, that is not contradictory, I see no manner of Reason for calling it *Halting*. He says, *The whole Hinge of the Controversie turns upon this Point; either the Way of Church of England Worship, and that of the Dissenters, are the same, or they are not, P. 20.* Here he ought to have told us what he means by the same Way of Worship; till that is known, there can be no Answer given to his *Dilemma*, but by distinguishing it into the Senses that the Terms may stand for. If by same Way of Worship he means an intire Agreement in all the Circumstances, as well as the Object of Worship, then, I say, the Dissenters no more use the *same Way of Worship* with the Church, than the Parish Churches use the *same Way of Worship* with the Cathedrals. But if by *same Way of Worship* be meant an Agreement in the Object, with no one Circumstance in one Place contradictory to that in the other, then the Worship of the Church and Dissenters are the same. He goes on, *P. 20. If they are the same Way of Worship, let those clear themselves from the Charge of Schism who uphold, &c.* I think the more natural Conclusion is, If they are the *same Way of Worship*, then a Man may go safely to either of 'em, since the Subject is Occasional Conformity. This Author does not see far before him when he makes it impossible for those Men to be clear from the Charge of Schism that worship the same Way with the Church of *England*. I do not see why the Dissenters may not prove the Church guilty of Schism by the same Argumentation. If the Worship of both are the same, let the Church of *England* clear herself from the Charge of Schism, and let him not tell us, that the one is establish'd, and the other not, till he hath told what he means by the Word

Word Establish'd, and then shew'd us to whom Scripture and Right Reason have given the Power of establishing any Religion, and upon what Principle the Obligation of intire Conformity to that Establishment is founded. A clear Resolution of these Questions will open the Controversie of Toleration, as well as Occasional Conformity, and upon a distinct Answer of Mr. *Stubs* to 'em, I shall freely enter the Lists with him. He proceeds, P. 20. *That if the Dissenters be not the same Way of Worship, &c. then we differ either in Circumstantials or Fundamentals.* This one would think should determine his Meaning of the Terms, *same Way of Worship*, to an Agreement in Circumstantials, &c. But I desire the Reader, by the Way, to observe that by the Term *Differ* cannot be meant Contradict. He goes on, P. 20. *If we differ in Circumstantials only, the Charge of Schism lyes as close as before.* Here the Conclusion seems to me to be this: If we differ in Circumstantials; that is, as I take it, if we vary only in a Mode; suppose in Kneeling, and Sitting at the Sacrament, an honest Man may Kneel with one, and Sit with the other. I think this Consequence of the Charge of Schism lyes as close to the Church as to the Dissenters, who differ no more in 'Circumstantials from the Church, than the Church from them.

As to his Quotations out of the Books of some Dissenters against Occasional Conformity; I Answer, that no more follows to the Prejudice of the Principles upon which some Dissenters justify their Occasional Conformity, than my Acknowledgment, who am a Churchman, and have never been Ten Times within a Meeting-Door, of the Lawfulness of that Practice, quoted by a Dissenter, will be to the Prejudice of any Arguments made use of in this Cause by any Conformist. All that can reasonably be inferr'd from it, is, that the Principles upon which Dissenters go in the same Communion are very different. He that hath such narrow Thoughts as to think it sinful to Communicate with the Church,
may

may perhaps have the same Thought with a Church Bigot. The Proceeding of Dissenters on such different Principles, is no Prejudice at all to their Cause, which will always be so, as long as Men have such different Capacities and Opportunities of knowing the Truth and Education hath so great an Influence. But I dare undertake for the Dissenters whenever there is an intire Agreement in Matters of Conformity, among the Clergy of the Church; they will agree in Matters of Nonconformity, when Bishop Burnet and Bishop Trelawny, Dr. South and Dr. Sherlock, Dr. Gibson and Dr. Atterbury, Mr. Ollyffe and Dr. Binks, Mr. Stephens of Surrey and Dr. Birch, agree; that then Mr. John Howe and Mr. Daniel Foe shall, and the rest of the Dissenters, one among another. Having given some Account of this Author's Honesty, and next of every thing that hath the Pretence of Argument,

I shall conclude with a Specimen of his Second-View, P. 5. hand Wit. He says, *One observes that Mr. Calamy's Name comes near to Calumny.* I have not quite so mean an Opinion of Mr. Stubs, as to think he approves of this Quibble, which is as much against the Church, as the Dissenters, who have had a *Calamy* among them too. But that he knew to whom he writ, and among whom it would pass.



F I N I S.

